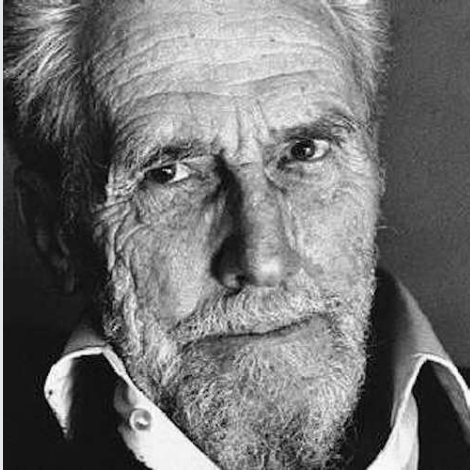




“He more or less single-handedly invented 20th-century poetry, or modernism, or the kind of literature that is ambitious, intellectually and musically stirring, and often haunting.”

—*The Guardian* ^{GD}



Ezra Pound

Ezra Pound

A biography of Ezra Pound (1885–1972), in his own words, as published in the 1949 edition of *Selected Poems of Ezra Pound*, the same year he was awarded the Bollingen Prize by the Library of Congress:

E.P.

Born, Hailey, Idaho, 30 Oct. 1885.

Educ. U. of Penn. and Hamilton. PhB. '05. M.A. '06.

Published. 1908. Venice; *A Lume Spento*.

1909, Mathews, London. *Personae, Exultations*.

Thereafter some 40 volumes, in London till 1920.

N. York 1920–'30.

1930 onwards, with Faber, London, and in U.S.

1918 began investigation of causes of war, to oppose same. Lectured in the Università Bocconi, Milan, 1931, on Jefferson and Van Buren.

From 1932 continual polemic in two languages, moving from Social Credit to Gesellism.

Obtaining imprint in Italy of Social Credit and Gesellite doctrines, comparing them with Catholic canonist theory and local practice.

1939 first visit to U.S. since 1910 in endeavour to stave off war. D.Litt, honorary, from Hamilton.

1940 after continued opposition obtained permission to use Rome radio for personal propaganda in support of U.S. Constitution, continuing after America's official entry into the war only on condition that he should never be asked to say anything contrary to his conscience or contrary to his duties as an American Citizen. Which promise was faithfully observed by the Italian Government.

A crucial architect of literary Modernism, American poet Ezra Pound (1885–1972) looms over 20th-century cultural history.

In the early teens of the 20th century, he was the heart of a seminal network, exchanging ideas between American and British authors. In 1912 he was hired as a regular contributor to Harriet Moore's *Poetry* and wrote as well for Wyndham Lewis's *BLAST*. From 1917 he was the London editor of *The Little Review*. Pound coined Imagism, a school of poetry in part derived from the clarity and economy of classical Japanese and Chinese poetry and he generously promoted writers such as Marianne Moore, H.D., Yeats, Joyce,

Hemingway, William Carlos Williams, and T.S. Eliot. By the 1920s, he was actively promulgating the notion of one world of literature, encouraging translation from around the globe and across millenia. He himself translated extensively and is a noted and notably pithy essayist (see *ABC of Reading*, *Guide to Kulchur*, *The Classic Noh Theater of Japan*, et al). His own work culminated in the monumental *Cantos*, an encyclopedic masterpiece of great poetic beauty.

Born in Hailey, Idaho, Pound attended the University of Pennnlsylvania, where he met his lifelong friends William Carlos Williams and Hilda Doolittle (or H.D., as he suggested she sign her poems). In 1908 he set off for Europe, and published at his own expense, *A lume spento*, his first book. He followed with *Exultations* (1909), *Personae* (1909), *Provenca* (1910), *Canzoni* (1911), *Lustra and Other Poems* (1917), *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* (1920), *Umbra: Collected Poems* (1920), *Cantos I–XVI* (1925), *A Draft of XXX Cantos* (1930), *Homage to Sextus Propertius* (1934), *The Fifth Decade of Cantos* (1937), *Cantos LII–LXXI* (1940), *The Pisan Cantos* (1948), *Patria Mia* (1950), and *The Cantos* (1972).

In 1914 Pound married Dorothy Shakespear and in 1921 moved to Italy. There he became engaged in Fascist politics, and for his radio propaganda against the United States during the war, he was arrested for treason in 1945. In 1946 he was declared mentally ill and committed to St Elizabeths Hospital in Washington, D.C., where he was held for a dozen years. Despite his political crimes, he was awarded The Bollingen Prize for his 1948 *Pisan Cantos*. After a lengthy campaign by fellow writers and his publisher James Laughlin of New Directions, he was released in 1958, returned to Italy, settled in Venice and into near complete silence, and died in 1972.

Related Articles

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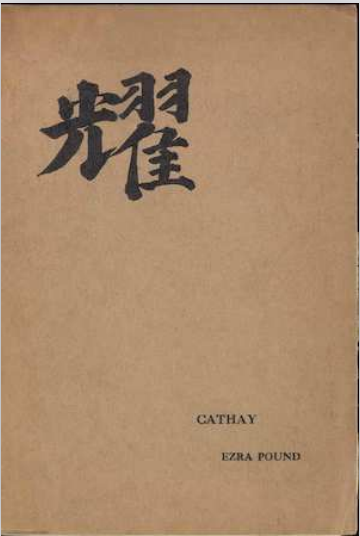
Poetry by Ezra Pound

With a contribution by [Mary de Rachewiltz](#)

First published in 1915, *Cathay*, Ezra Pound's early monumental work, originally contained fourteen translations from the Chinese and a translation of the Anglo-Saxon poem "The Seafarer." In 1916, *Cathay* was reprinted in Pound's book *Lustra* without "The Seafarer" and with four more Chinese poems. *Cathay* was greatly indebted to the notes of Ernest Fenollosa, a Harvard-trained scholar. "In Fenollosa's Chinese poetry materials," the noted scholar Zhaoming Qian writes, "Pound discovered a new model that at once mirrored and challenged his developing poetics...."

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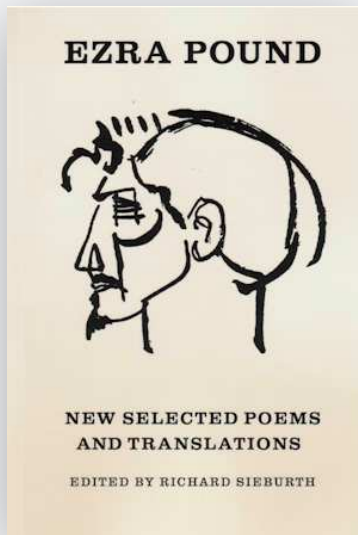
New Selected Poems &

Translations

Poetry by Ezra Pound

Edited by [Richard Sieburth](#)

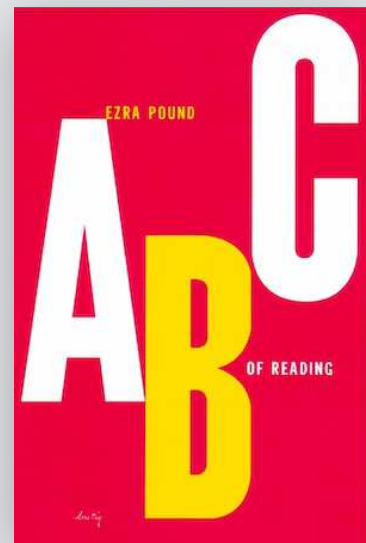
This newly revised and greatly expanded edition of Ezra Pound's Selected Poems is intended to articulate Pound for the twenty-first century. Gone are many of the "stale creampuffs" (as Pound called them) of the 1949 edition. Instead, new emphasis has been laid on the interpenetration of original composition and translation within Pound's career. New features of this edition include the complete "Homage to Sextus Propertius" in its original lineation, early translations from Cavalcanti, Heine, and the troubadours, as well as late translations of Sophocles, and the Confucian Odes....

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ABC of Reading

Literature by Ezra Pound

This important work, first published in 1934, is a concise statement of Pound's aesthetic theory. It is a primer for the reader who wants to maintain an active, critical mind and become increasingly sensitive to the beauty and inspiration of the world's best literature. With characteristic vigor and iconoclasm, Pound illustrates his precepts with exhibits meticulously chosen from the classics, and the concluding "Treatise on Meter" provides an illuminating essay for anyone aspiring to read and write poetry....

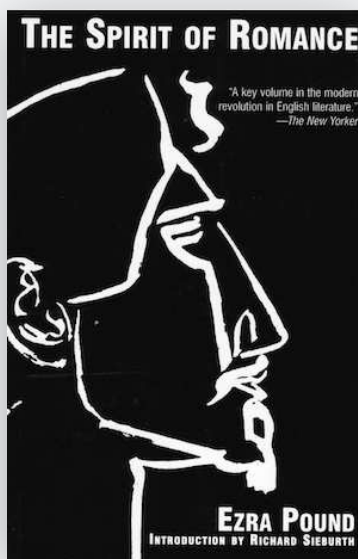
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The Spirit Of Romance

Poetry by Ezra Pound

Edited by [Richard Sieburth](#)

Dating from 1910 and subtitled "An Attempt to Define Somewhat the Charm of the Pre-Renaissance Literature of Latin Europe," The Spirit of Romance is one of the key books in Ezra Pound's revaluation of literary tradition. Pound gives us first the background of the transition from Latin to the Romance languages, then deals with the Provençal Troubadours, notably Arnaut Daniel; the medieval narrative poetry of Northern France; the Chanson de Roland; Dante and his precursors, such as Guinizelli and Cavalcanti; the Spanish epic of El Cid; Villon; Renaissance Latin poets; the plays of Lope de Vega; and Camoens' Portuguese epic The Lusíads....

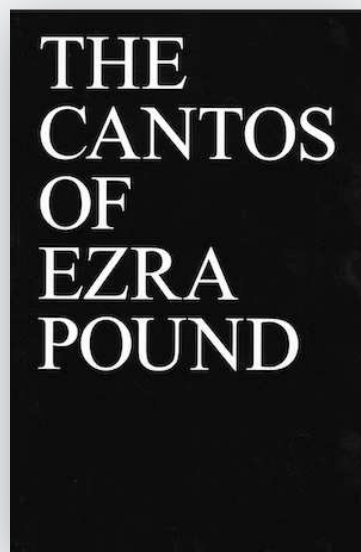
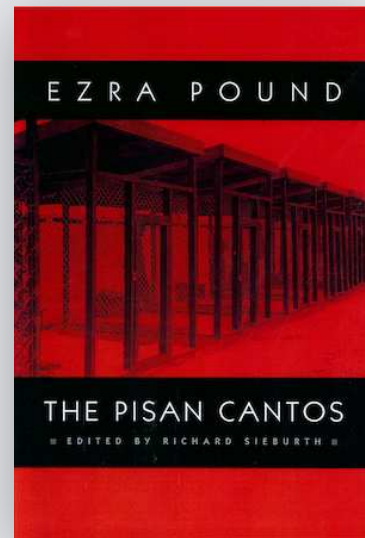
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The Pisan Cantos

Poetry by Ezra Pound

Edited by [Richard Sieburth](#)

Ezra Pound's The Pisan Cantos were written in 1945, while the poet was being held in an American military detention center near Pisa, Italy, as a result of his pro-Fascist wartime broadcasts to America on Radio Rome. Imprisoned for some weeks in a wire cage open to the elements, Pound suffered a nervous collapse from the physical and emotional strain. Out of the agony of his own inferno came the eleven cantos that became the sixth hook of his modernist epic, The Cantos, itself conceived as a Divine Comedy for our time...

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The Cantos Of Ezra Pound

by Ezra Pound

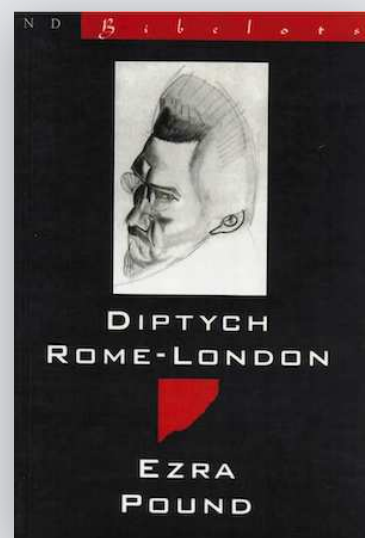
Now available for the first time in paperback, The Cantos is the most important epic poem of the twentieth century. Delmore Schwartz said about The Cantos: "They are one of the touchstones of modern poetry." William Carlos Williams said: "Pound discloses history by its odor, by the feel of it--in the words; fuses it with the words, present and past, to MAKE his Cantos. Make them." Since the 1969 revised edition, the Italian Cantos LXXII and LXXIII (as well as a 1966 fragment concluding the work) have been added...

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Diptych Rome-London

by Ezra Pound

Diptych Rome-London presents the two undisputed masterpieces of Pound's pre-Cantos work--the long poems "Homage to Sextus Propertius" and "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley." Created in the aftermath of World War I, the poems ironically consider the place of the artist in "a botched civilization." "Homage to Sextus Propertius" (1917) is a free translation from the Latin, an homage to the Roman poet; praising its "enormous freedom and range of tone," Hugh Kenner remarked that "few more original poems exist in English..."

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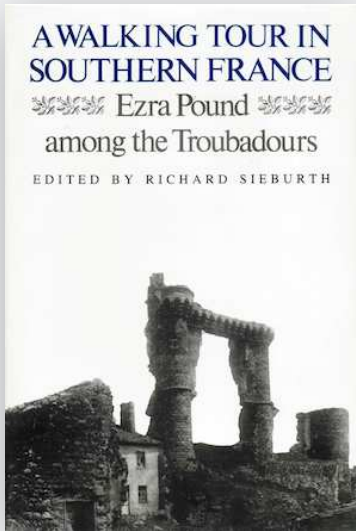
A Walking Tour In Southern F

France

Literature by Ezra Pound

Edited by [Richard Sieburth](#)

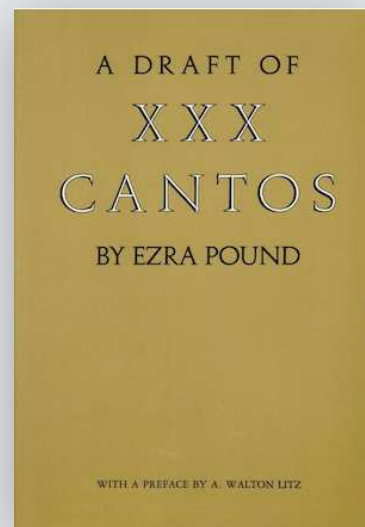
Rummaging through his papers in 1958, Ezra Pound came across a cache of notebooks dating back to the summer of 1912, when as a young man he had walked the troubadour landscape of southern France. Pound had been fascinated with the poetry of medieval Provence since his college days. His experiments with the complex lyric forms of Amaut Daniel, Bertran de Born, and others were included in his earliest books of poems; his scholarly pursuits in the field found their way into *The Spirit of Romance* (1910); and the troubadour mystique was to become a resonant motif of the *Cantos*....

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A Draft Of XXX Cantos

Poetry by Ezra Pound

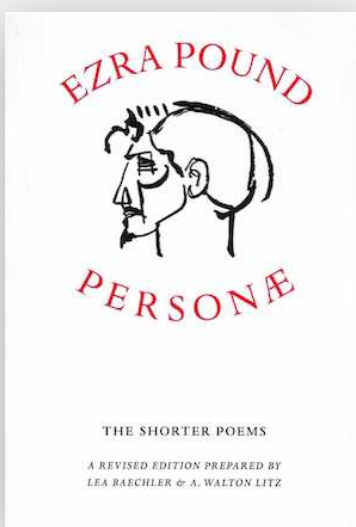
The *Cantos* have been called Ezra Pound's intellectual diary, composed over the course of sixty years. An epic of great vision and complexity, it addresses the profound human issues in history and in our time. Readers often approach the work warily, daunted by Pound's encyclopedic erudition, but the *Cantos* were written to be read first and foremost as poetry. Each of the nine groupings of poems can be seen as a fresh wave that swells out from and falls back upon the earlier cantos, extending them structurally, adding new layers of meaning....

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Personae

Poetry by Ezra Pound

If the invention of literary modernism is usually attributed to James Joyce, T. S. Eliot, and Ezra Pound, it was Pound alone who provides (in Hugh Kenner's words) "the synergetic presence" to convert individual experiment into an international movement. In 1926, Pound carefully sculpted his body of shorter poems into a definitive collection that would best show the concentration of force, the economy of means, and the habit of analysis that were, to him, the hallmarks of the new style....

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Women Of Trachis

Theater by Ezra Pound

For Ezra Pound, Sophokles' *Women of Trachis* represented 'the highest peak of Greek sensibility registered in any of the plays that have come down to us..'

Nothing rhetorical, nothing long-winded survives in Pound's tragedy of Herakles. His language is lit with lights long extinguished in the traditionally

ornate and airless verse translations. With no mincing, poetry speeds tragedy down its course to disaster. Pound's version of Women of Trachis was first published by New Directions in 1957...

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Ezra Pound and Dorothy Shakespear

Literature by Ezra Pound

"Ezra.' Listen to it--Ezra! Ezra!--And a third time--Ezra!... Some people have complained of untidy boots--how could they look at his boots, when there is his moving, beautiful face to watch!" These words from the notebook of Dorothy Shakespear, dated February 16, 1909, record the entry into her life of the energetic young American, recently arrived in London, who was to become her husband--Ezra Pound. Their correspondence, begun the following year, extends over more than six decades, until the poet's death in 1972...

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Pound/Ford

Literature by Ezra Pound

The friendship between Ezra Pound (1885-1972) and Ford Madox Ford (1873-1939) lasted for thirty years. It began in London in 1909, shortly after Pound's arrival, continued in Paris, and was afterward maintained without ruptures, quarrels, or serious disagreements, their warm affection and loyalty holding them together through life's vicissitudes, separation, and exile. Pound/Ford: The Story of a Literary Friendship documents, with letters as well as essays, reviews, and reminiscences--a considerable portion of which is published here for the first time--one of the most significant relationships in the development of modernism...

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Collected Early Poems of Ezra Pound

Poetry by Ezra Pound

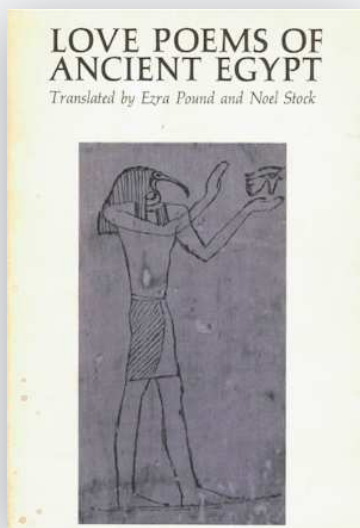
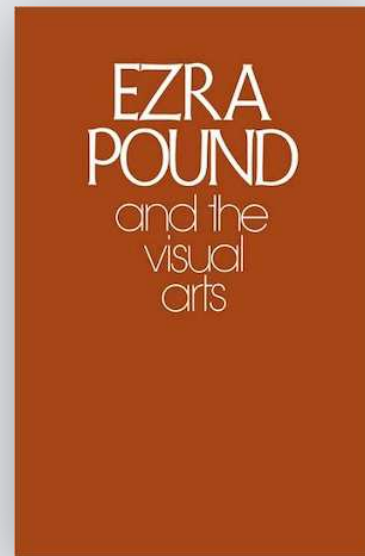
The Collected Early Poems of Ezra Pound contains the complete text, the poet's first six books, their title pages in facsimile (A Lume Spento, 1908; A Quinzaine for This Yule, 1908; Personae, 1909; Exultations, 1909; Canzoni, 1911; Ripostes, 1912), and the long poem Redondillas (1911), for many years available only in a rare limited edition. There are, in addition, twenty-five poems originally published in periodicals but not previously collected, as well as thirty-eight others drawn from miscellaneous manuscripts...

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Ezra Pound And The Visual Arts

Literature by Ezra Pound

A gathering of Ezra Pound's writing, criticism, and reviews on art.

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Love Poems Of Ancient Egypt

Poetry by Ezra Pound

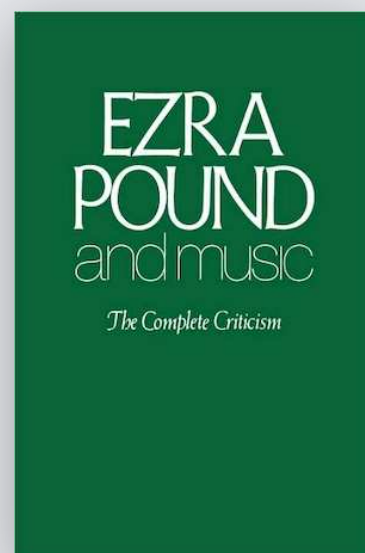
Ezra Pound's incomparable gifts as a translator delight us anew in *Conversations in Courtship*, an Egyptian love poem which he has put into English from the Italian versions of his son-in-law Boris de Rachewiltz, a distinguished Egyptologist. Illness having prevented Mr. Pound from continuing the work, the remaining poems of this remarkable collection, which is drawn from the hieroglyphics of papyri and pottery inscriptions, have been translated by the poet Noel Stock...

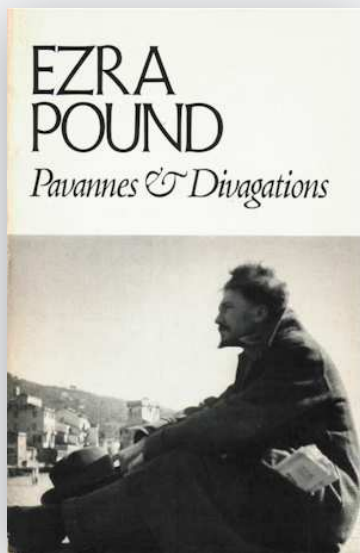
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Ezra Pound And Music

Literature by Ezra Pound

Included here are all of Pound's concert reviews and statements; the biweekly columns written under the pen name William Atheling for *The New Age* in London; articles from other periodicals; the complete text of the 1924 landmark volume *Antheil and the Treatise on Harmony*; extracts from books and letters, and the poet's additional writings on the subject of music. The pieces are organized chronologically, with illuminating commentary, thorough footnotes, and an index....

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Pavannes & Divagations

Poetry by Ezra Pound

The canon of Ezra Pound would be incomplete without a representative collection in the master's lighter vein. Pavanes and Divagations seeks to meet this need. Included are Pound's long essay "Indiscretions," one of his rare autobiographical writings, an assortment of facetious verses, his superb translations from the dialogues of Fontenelle, causeries on topics ranging from religion to the mores of moneyed society, as well as a miscellany of editorials, denunciations, and literary masquerades...

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Selected Prose 1909-1965

Fiction by Ezra Pound

Translated by [William Cookson](#)

With a contribution by [Ezra Pound](#)

'In making this selection," writes William Cookson in his introduction to this paperback edition of early and out-of-print writings, "my aim has been to show the unity of Ezra Pound's concerns." The sixty-six pieces in Pound's Selected Prose 1909-1965 are arranged thematically, and while they are organized chronologically within several groupings, there are natural cross-currents of thoughts among them. Particular emphasis, however, is given to the articles concerned with "Civilisation, Money and History..."

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Gaudier-Brzeska

Literature by Ezra Pound

Ezra Pound's book on the French sculptor Henri Gaudier-Brzeska was first published in 1916. An enlarged edition, including thirty pages of illustrations (sculpture and drawings) as well as Pound's later pieces on Gaudier, was brought out in 1970, and is now re-issued as an ND Paperback. The memoir is valuable both for the history of modern art and for what it shows us of Pound himself, his ability to recognize genius in others and then to publicize it effectively...

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Selected Letters Of Ezra Pound

Literature by Ezra Pound

Ezra Pound would deserve a place in the literary history of the twentieth century if only for bringing to light and to publication the work, among others, of T. S. Eliot, Robert Frost, James Joyce and William Carlos Williams. His tireless activities in behalf of other poets, artists, and literary ventures of every sort were in large part carried on by way of his voluminous correspondence. Eliot himself once commented that Pound's "epistolary style is masterly"—a judgment wholly confirmed by the 384 examples that comprise this selection...

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Selected Cantos

Poetry by Ezra Pound

This selection from the Cantos was made by Ezra Pound himself in 1965. It is intended to indicate main elements in the long poem—his personal epic—with which he was engaged for more than fifty years. His choice includes, of course, a number of the Cantos most admired by critics and anthologists, such as Canto XIII ("Kung [Confucius] walked by the dynastic temple..."), Canto XLV ("With usura hath no man a house of good stone...") and the passage from The Pisan Cantos (LXXXI) beginning "What thou lovest well remains / the rest is dross," and so the book is an ideal introduction for newcomers to the great work...

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Confucius

Poetry by Ezra Pound

The study of Chinese culture was a dominant concern in Ezra Pound's life and work. His great Canto XIII is about Kung (Confucius), Cantos LII-LXI deal with Chinese history, and in the later Cantos key motifs are often given in Chinese quotations with the characters set into the English text. His introduction to Oriental literature was chiefly through Ernest Fenollosa whose translations and notes were given him by the scholars widow in London about 1913...

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Literary Essays Of Ezra Pound

Literature by Ezra Pound

For this definitive collection of Pound's Literary Essays, his friend (and English editor) T. S. Eliot chose material from five earlier volumes: Pavannes and Divisions (1918), Instigations (1920), How to Read (1931), Make It New (1934), and Polite Essays (1937). 33 pieces are arranged in three groups: "The Art of Poetry," "The Tradition," and "Contemporaries." Eliot wrote in his introduction: "I hope that this volume will demonstrate that Pound's literary criticism is the most important contemporary criticism of its kind ..."

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Guide To Kulchur

Fiction by Ezra Pound

The Guide to Kulchur, first published in 1938, is one of Ezra Pound's most stimulating books. As might be expected, this is no ordinary Baedeker of the arts, no conventional tour of familiar landmarks and highspots, but an iconoclastic revision of the cultural (in the broadest sense) curriculum. In a sequence of short, pungent chapters, Pound covers the whole territory of "kulchur"--from the Chinese philosophers to modern poetry, from music to economics--as he discovered it for himself in a lifetime of reading, looking, and listening...

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Pound/Joyce: Letters & Essays

Literature by Ezra Pound

This is the record of one of the most interesting personal relationships of modern literature. Between 1913, when Yeats first called Joyce's work to Pound's attention, and 1920 there was a steady flow of letters, in which we see Pound finding publishers for Joyce, collecting money for him, defending him against censorship, even sending spare clothes. More than sixty letters from Pound to Joyce have survived, while those from Joyce to Pound will be found in the Viking Press Joyce correspondence volumes...

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Confucius To Cummings

Fiction by Ezra Pound

This anthology is Ezra Pound's own choice of the poetry of various ages and cultures--ranging from his translations of the Confucian Odes up to E. E. Cummings--which he considered the finest of its type. It is a statement by example of the "Pound critical canon" and, as such, a short course in the history of world poetry, useful alike for the student and the general reader. Nearly a hundred poets are represented, a number of them in Pound's own translations, with emphasis on the Greek and Latin, Chinese, Troubadour, Renaissance, and Elizabethan...

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Ezra Pound: Translations

Poetry by Ezra Pound

Poetry by Ezra Pound

Ezra Pound is destined to rank as one of the great translators of all time. Ranging through many languages, he chose for translation writers whose work marked a significant turning point in the development of world literature, or key poems which exemplify what is most vital in a given period or genre. This new enlarged edition, devoted chiefly to poetry, includes some forty pages of previously uncollected material. Anglo-Saxon: The Seafarer....

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The Classic Noh Theatre Of Japan

Theater by Ezra Pound

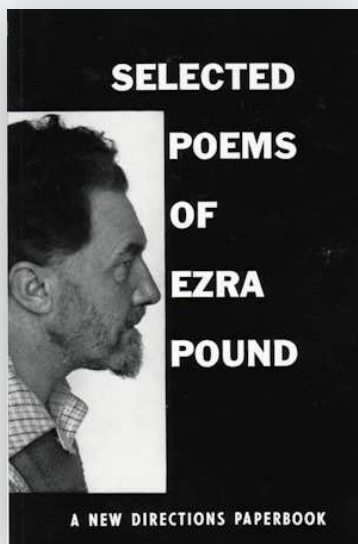
Fifteen of the most celebrated plays of the Noh theatre repertory are given here in their entirety and five more are presented in synopsis. The translations are grounded in a critical discussion of the Noh theatre, its history and place in the court life of Japan, a description of the stage on which it is performed, its music, costumes, and masks, and the dance which is usually the high point of the performance....

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Selected Poems of Ezra Pound

by Ezra Pound

Ezra Pound has been called "the inventor of modern poetry in English." The verse and criticism which he produced during the early years of this century very largely determined the directions of creative writing in our time; and virtually every major poet in England and America today has acknowledged his help or influence. Pound's lyric genius, his superb technique, and his fresh insight into literary problems make him one of the small company of men who through the centuries have kept poetry alive, one of the great innovators....

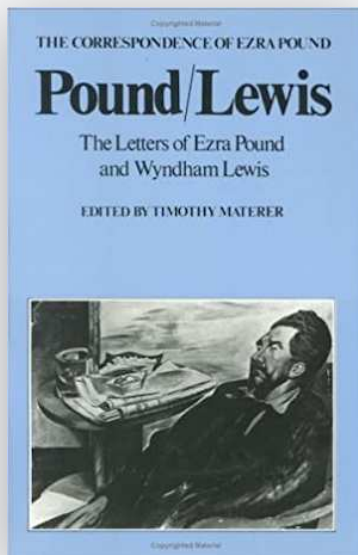
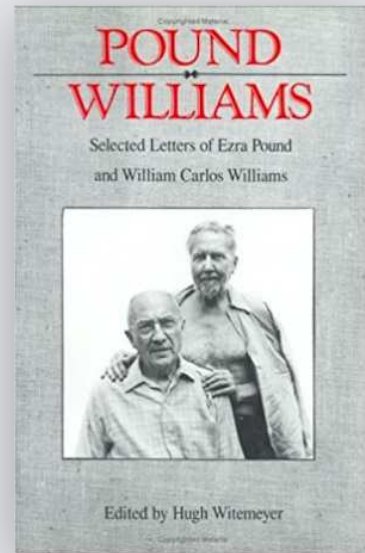
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Pound/ Williams: Selected Correspondence of Ezra Pound and William Carlos Williams (The

Correspondence of Ezra Pound)

Literature by William Carlos Williams and Ezra Pound

Ezra Pound and William Carlos Williams, two towering figures in American poetry, began their lifelong, and often contentious, friendship as students at the University of Pennsylvania. Their correspondence ran from 1907, the year Pound took up his virtually permanent residence in Europe, until Williams' death in 1963. The letters contribute an unparalleled documentary record of modern culture - a wealth of information about the lives and works of the two poets themselves; the literary and political movements in which they became involved and the impact of public events upon the arts; the activities of other writers and artists; and the world of small presses and little magazines that nourished the growth of modernism....

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Pound/Lewis

Literature by Wyndham Lewis and Ezra Pound

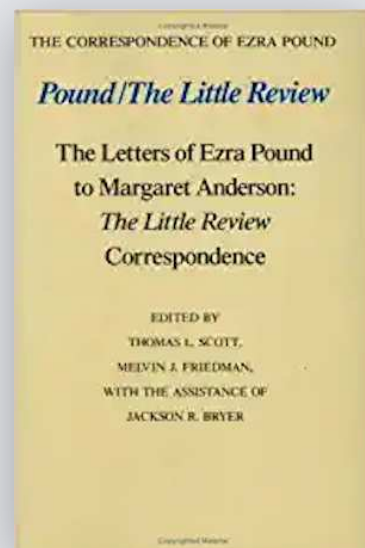
The friendship of Ezra Pound and Wyndham Lewis began in London in 1909, survived two European wars and the rise and fall of the totalitarian governments both men misguidedly supported, and lasted through Pound's years of confinement at St. Elizabeths, to Lewis's death in 1957. In Pound/Lewis, their correspondence of five decades is gathered for the first time; it proves a revealing reflection of their intense, always professional, mutual regard.

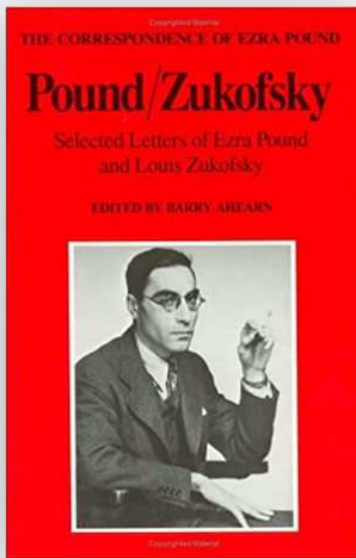
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Pound/The Little Review

Literature by Ezra Pound

Frustrated in his working relationship with Harriet Monroe and her Poetry magazine, Pound turned to Margaret Anderson, the open-minded founder of the Little Review. This Chicago-based editor helped the expatriate poet (living in London, then Paris) publish poems by Yeats, Eliot and himself, as well as fiction by Ford Madox Ford and Wyndham Lewis and, at Pound's urging, James Joyce's Ulysses. The serialization of the latter work brought down the wrath of U....

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Pound/Zukofsky

Literature by Louis Zukofsky and Ezra Pound

Pound/Zukofsky is the fifth volume in the ongoing series, The Correspondence of Ezra Pound. Pound (1885-1972) and Zukofsky (1904-1978) met only three times: in Rapallo, Italy, for a few weeks in 1933; for a few hours in New York, in 1939; and briefly again at St. Elizabeths Hospital, in Washington, D.C., in 1954. Yet by the time of their first meeting, they had already exchanged almost 300 letters, over half of their total correspondence...

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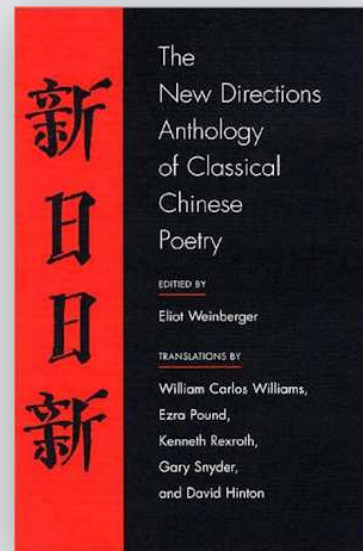
The New Directions Anthology Of Classical Chinese Poetry

Poetry

Translated from the Classical Chinese by [David Hinton](#), [Kenneth Rexroth](#), [Ezra Pound](#), [Gary Snyder](#) and [William Carlos Williams](#)

Edited by [Eliot Weinberger](#)

A rich compendium of translations, The New Directions Anthology of Chinese Poetry is the first collection to look at Chinese poetry through its enormous influence on American poetry. Beginning with Ezra Pound's *Cathay* (1915), the anthology includes translations by three other major U.S. poets--William Carlos Williams, Kenneth Rexroth, Gary Snyder--and an important poet-translator-scholar, David Hinton, all of whom have long been associated with New Directions. It is one of the first general anthologies ever to consider the process of translation by presenting different versions of the same poem by multiple translators, as well as examples of the translators rewriting themselves...

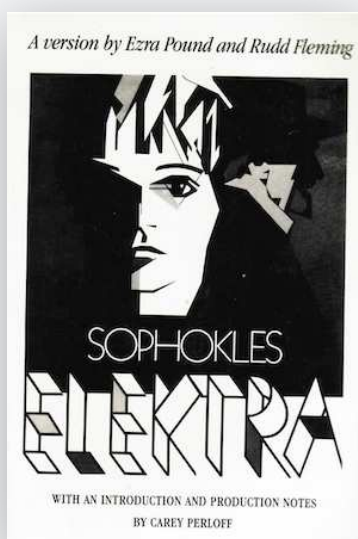
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Sophokles Elektra

Theater

Translated by [Ezra Pound](#)

Early in 1949, while under indictment for treason and hospitalized by court order at St. Elizabeths Hospital in Washington, D.C., Ezra Pound collaborated with Rudd Fleming, a professor at the University of Maryland, on a new version of Sophokles' *Elektra*. Pound's decision to focus on this play of imprisonment and justice at such a crucial juncture in his own life and art throws both the play and the poet into stark and ironic relief...

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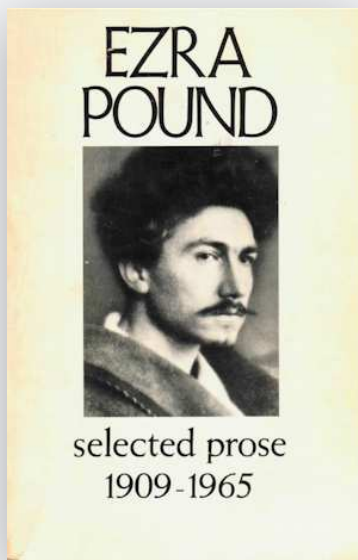
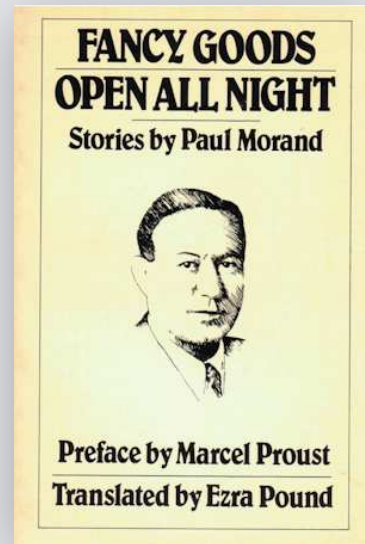
by Paul Morand

Translated from the French by [Ezra Pound](#)

The reputation of Paul Morand (1888-1976) rests squarely upon his short stories from the 1920s, which introduced a fresh and exuberant style into postwar French letters. Yet in spite of his immense popularity and later prestige (he was elected to the Academie Française in 1968), he has remained largely unknown to English-speaking readers. Ezra Pound, shortly after arriving in Paris in 1920, made contact with Morand and, always ready to champion new and distinct voices, was soon translating his short stories for the British publishers Chapman and Dodd...

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Selected Prose 1909-1965

Fiction by Ezra Pound

Translated by [William Cookson](#)

With a contribution by [Ezra Pound](#)

'In making this selection,' writes William Cookson in his introduction to this paperback edition of early and out-of-print writings, 'my aim has been to show the unity of Ezra Pound's concerns.' The sixty-six pieces in Pound's Selected Prose 1909-1965 are arranged thematically, and while they are organized chronologically within several groupings, there are natural cross-currents of thoughts among them. Particular emphasis, however, is given to the articles concerned with 'Civilisation, Money and History...'

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“With the vers libre of *Cathay*, T. S. Eliot famously observed, Pound had become “the inventor of Chinese poetry for our time.””

—Richard Sieburth

“Pound, transcreating Chinese poetry in English, seems to have anticipated that making it new in our endless, inescapable present would increasingly mean returning to the old.”

—Pankaj Mishra, *The New York Times Book Review*

“Full of original and suggestive ideas on the meaning and operation of the poetic art.”

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“He more or less single-handedly invented 20th-century poetry, or modernism, or the kind of literature that is ambitious, intellectually and musically stirring, and often haunting.”

—*The Guardian* ^{GD}

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